(b) ONGC, Oil India Ltd. (OIL) and private joint venture companies are carrying out exploration for oil and gas in the areas granted to them on nomination basis under Pre-New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) and NELP rounds. Two more onland blocks are under offer in NELP-IVth round in this basin. Lastly, oil refineries are set up on techno-economic consideration.

(c) Under X Plan, National Oil Companies (NOCs) have earmarked Rs. 831.44 crores for exploration activities in the basin and private joint venture companies have committed expenditure of Rs. 97 crores in their respective current exploration.

Reservation policy in appointment of dealers

983. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Oil sector PSUs will soon be allowed to appoint dealers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the need for this measure; and

(d) in what manner the issue of reservation will be addressed in this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (d) Consequent upon the dismantling of the Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM) in the petroleum sector with effect from 1.4.2002, the selection of dealers/distributors for retail outlets (petrol pumps) SKO-LDO dealerships and LPG distributorships at different locations in the country, will be made by the oil marketing companies (OMCs) themselves as per the guidelines to be adopted by them. While finalising the policy, OMCs will take a view on all related questions including reservation.

Mobility of resources for crude oil production

984. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that based on proven reserve of 732 million tonnes of crude oil and with the present GDP growth rate of 6 per cent the demand for crude oil is likely to be 190 million tonnes by 2011-12, which may necessitate 81 per cent import; and

(b) if so, what is our perspective planning in view of a limited resource base, lacking adequate infrastructure and an integrated long-term energy policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) The estimated crude oil reserves of the country as on 01.04.2003 were 732 million metric tonne. As per the India Hydrocarbon Vision-2025 (IHV) report, the demand for crude oil by year 2011 has been estimated at about 190 million metric tonne.

Exploration for hydrocarbons and the resultant reserves accretion, have a 'cause and effect' but not a direct relationship. The above is a continuous process and with accelerated exploration and induction of new technologies, recoverable reserves keep on getting upgraded. The IHV report has laid down the road map and in order to enhance the oil gas security for the country, a multi-pronged strategy is being pursued namely; to accelerate indigenous oil and gas exploration efforts, to improve recovery from existing producing fields by application of improved oil recovery/enhanced oil recovery methods, to secure oil and gas abroad, to explore non-conventional sources of energy such as Coal Bed Methane and Gas Hydrates and to create strategic petroleum reserves. Government has also started encouraging use of bio-fuel by blending ethanol with motor spirit.

National Culture Policy

985. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 4359 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 7th May, 2002 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have not taken any decision so far to formulate any National Policy on Culture;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and